National Aeronautics and Space Administration

countdown

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STS-126 crew ready for Friday's 7:55 p.m. liftoff

◆ **Shuttle Update:** The STS-126 crew members arrived Tuesday at KSC to prepare for launch. They made a brief presentation to the media (see below). On Wednesday, Commander Chris Ferguson and Pilot Eric Boe practiced shuttle landings aboard the Shuttle Training Aircraft.

At 10 a.m. **today**, the countdown status briefing will feature STS-126 NASA Test Director Charlie Blackwell-Thompson, Payload Manager Joe Delai and shuttle Weather Officer Kathy Winters. At 5:15 p.m., the crew will have orbiter, payload and weather briefings with the Ascent Team of flight controllers at Mission Control in Houston. On Friday, crew breakfast will be at 11:30 a.m. The suit-up will begin at 3:35 p.m. and the crew will leave for Launch Pad 39A at 4:05 p.m. Launch of space shuttle Endeavour is scheduled for 7:55:31 p.m.

◆ **ISS Update:** When Endeavour and crew lift off on the STS-126 mission for the 27th shuttle flight to the International Space Station, it's major payload will consist of equipment for enlarging the space station's capacity to accommodate a six-member crew.

Some of the additions aboard are new crew galley components that include two food warmers, a refrigerator and a water dispenser; modular crew quarters to be installed in the Harmony node that will provide each of the station's occupants with their own "personal space" that resembles a booth, including visual, light and acoustic isolation, as well as laptop connectivity; the Russian-built toilet system that will provide the crew with a second facility on the station, located in the Destiny lab; and the Water Recovery System designed to provide drinking-quality water through the reclamation of wastewater, including urine and hygiene wastes. The water that's produced will be used to support the crew and work aboard the station.

Space station to get makeover for bigger crew

■ **Administrator "All Hands Meeting" —** Please join NASA Administrator Mike Griffin at 11 a.m. **today** in the Training Auditorium for an "All Hands Meeting" and a question-and-answer session. Seating allocations have been distributed through NASA directorates and contractor offices. The event also will be broadcast live on closed-circuit TV, channel 7, and can be viewed on the internal home page at **http://portal.ksc.nasa.gov/portal/**.

■ **KEA-31 To Be Held Dec. 3 —** The Kennedy Engineering Academy will host "An Empirical Model for Estimating the Probability of Electrical Short Circuits from Tin Whiskers – Part I" from 9 to 10 a.m. Dec. 3 at the KSC Training Auditorium.

Dr. Karim Courey from the JSC Orbiter Project Office and Clara Wright from the KSC Materials Failure Analysis Laboratory will discuss the research performed at KSC to develop an empirical model for estimating the probability of electrical short circuits from tin whiskers. They will also discuss the results of the focused ion beam, or FIB, sectioning of three tin whiskers.

This presentation summarizes the research published in an IEEE Journal and presented at the 2nd International Symposium on Tin Whiskers in Tokyo, Japan.

NASA and contractor personnel are invited to attend. Questions and comments should be sent to *KSC-Engineering-Academy@mail.nasa.gov*. To view future listings or video/PDF versions of past KEA events, please go to: **http://kea.ksc.nasa.gov/**.

■ **Holiday Massage Discounts —** Available through Jan. 6, a 30-minute massage is $20, and one-hour massage is **only** $30. Discounts also are available for gift certificates, which make a great holiday gift! Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday- Friday. For an appointment, call Valerie at 867-4762 or send her an e-mail at *valerie.s.jaramillo@nasa.gov*.

Countdown is published every Tuesday & Thursday for NASA KSC employees. Deadlines are 9 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays. E-mail news to *anita.l.barrett@nasa.gov*. For questions or information, e-mail or call 867-2815. You can also find PDF editions of *Countdown* on the Web at: http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/news/countdown/countdown_toc.html.